

Please amend the Claims as set forth below without prejudice to Applicant's filing one or more continuation or divisional applications directed to one or more claims as originally filed.

In the Claims:

Claims 1-14 (previously cancelled)

Claim 15 (previously presented) A method of forming a medical device comprising the steps of:

providing an optical fiber core having a proximal end and a distal face;

associating the proximal end of the core with an optical connector;

enclosing the optical fiber core in a continuous, uninterrupted sleeve, wherein the sleeve has a length at least substantially the length of the optical fiber core extending from the optical connector to at least the distal face of the optical fiber core.

Claim 16. (original) The method of Claim 15 wherein the step of enclosing the optical fiber core in the sleeve comprises extending the sleeve distally of the distal face of the optical fiber core.

Claim 17. (currently amended) The method of Claim 15 comprising forming a closed tip in the sleeve, the tip being disposed distal of distal face of the optical fiber core.

Claim 18. (original) The method of Claim 15 comprising providing an optical coupling layer intermediate a portion of the sleeve and a distal portion of the optical fiber core.

Claim 19. (currently amended) The method of Claim 15 comprising forming a closed tip in the sleeve, the closed tip being disposed distal of the distal face of the optical fiber core, wherein a space is provided intermediate the distal face of the optical fiber core and the sleeve tip.

Claim 20. (original) The method of Claim 19 comprising disposing a component in the space provided intermediate the distal face of the optical fiber core and the sleeve tip.

Claim 21. (original) The method of Claim 20 comprising disposing a light scattering component in the space provided intermediate the distal face of the optical fiber core and the sleeve tip.

Claim 22. (previously presented) The method of Claim 15 comprising the step of abrading a portion of an inner surface of the sleeve.

Claim 23. (original) The method of Claim 15 wherein the step of enclosing the optical fiber core in the sleeve results in the sleeve touching the core.

Claim 24. (currently amended) A method of making a medical device comprising the steps of:

exposing a distal portion of an optical fiber core;  
sliding a continuous, uninterrupted sleeve over substantially the full length of the fiber core;  
providing an optical coupling layer intermediate the distal portion of the optical fiber core and the sleeve; and  
forming a closed, tissue penetrating tip in the sleeve,  
the closed, tissue penetrating tip disposed distal of the distal portion of the optical fiber core.

Claim 25. (previously cancelled)

Claim 26. (previously presented) The method of Claim 24 further comprising providing a space intermediate the distal face of the optical fiber core and the tissue penetrating tip.

Claim 27. (previously presented) The method of Claim 24 further comprising disposing a material having fluorescent properties intermediate the distal face of the optical fiber core and the tip.

Claim 28. (original) The method of Claim 24 comprising the step of contacting the fiber optic core with the sleeve.

Claim 29. (original) The method of Claim 24 comprising the step of abrading a portion of the inner surface of the sleeve.

Claim 30. (original) A method of forming a medical device comprising the steps of:

- providing a continuous, uninterrupted light transmitting sleeve;

- providing a length of optical fiber comprising an optical fiber core;

- associating a proximal end of the optical fiber core with an optical connector; and

- providing a light transmitting sleeve around the optical fiber and extending in a continuous, uninterrupted fashion from the connector to a distal portion of the optical fiber.